The Tin Can Tourists Begin their Gay Migrations

"Off for the West," father, mother, daughters and son, all comfortably housed, with bedrooms, bath, kitchen, dining room, parlor, observation porch and rainproof roof—and no fare to pay.

EAST is East in the United States, as in the racial characteristics of which Kipling writes. But as those characteristics may be modified by contact with opposite characteristics, so the "tin can tourists" are overriding the barriers between the Western States and those in the East. For on the "tin can trail" there is neither East nor West and barriers are thrown aside.

With the spring sun warming the roads the "tin canners" are hauling their traveling cottages from winter garages to look upon them hopefully. "Will the car that carried us to Pittsburgh last year get to St. Louis this?" "Will a new coat of paint do the trick, or must the engine be overhauled?" "Will an extension on the stovepipe carry away the smoke which last year filled the cottage when rainy weather forced inside cooking?" And finally—"Where shall we go?"

If the tourist asking this last question lives in New York the answer is almost sure to be: "We will go West and see the country." If, on the other hand, he lives in California, he and his wife cry out as one: "We will go East!"

They are vagabonds dressed up, these tourists who travel over country roads in cumbersome but efficiently ordered cottages on wheels. They are men and women from cities who have felt the age old call of the outroad, but who are wisely not desirous of wearing their feet out upon it. The road is no less romantic and interesting if it is ridden over and exhaustion does not intrude itself into sunsets.

So some in traveling homes elaborate and complete, some in light roadsters with a tent strapped to the running board, the tourists are seeking the open road now that spring has come. And once clear of cities they will justify the modification of their title by eating their food out of tin cans by the roadside.

Almost every day they may be seen on the Hudson River ferryboats, these summer abodes of the "tin can tourists." Most of them carry along many of the conveniences of home. Many are marvels of compact efficiency.

They are ambitious, too, these cottages bound West on their own wheels. "New York to San Francisco," reads the banner on one, and you wish it well, hoping it will get at least to Pittsburgh. Few of the trips, if one is to judge by the banners, are planned to stop this side of the west coast.

Many of them, of course, stop far short of their objective. But more, no doubt, lured by the sunny road and spurred on by the plans of those they meet, go on. And so somewhere, perhaps in Kansas, the East meets the West and borrows its water bucket.

Long before that, of course, the adventures have begun. The East has tales to tell and tales to listen to.

There are stories of night bivouacs beside the road where friendships are made that continue through many States, parties that form themselves by the camaraderie of the road and are broken by day, only to meet again by night; stories of adventures on the way, of misguiding directions given by singularly stupid natives, apparently bent on creating as much trouble as possible; stories of marvelous new inventions for carrying complete camping equipment, including beds and a cook stove, on the running board of a Ford car; stories of impossible roads and wonderful roads, and of the town tourist park in the last town. Out of the mass of similar experiences comradeship is created among those who shared them.

In many middle Western towns tourist parks have been established under municipal direction to care for the comfort of the "tin can tourists" who visit. Every effort is made to welcome them, for their patronage is much desired by the merchants of the smaller towns through which they pass. City water is piped to the places set aside, so that water for coffee may be secured without the need of long excursions with buckets; fireplaces are constructed for the convenience of those whose stoves may be on strike; electric lights are provided to enable the tourist to read the town newspapers—incidentally the advertisements of the town merchants.

"Six o'clock and time to camp"—where one throws his tent, others soon stop for the night, and the little open space along the road becomes a busy, gossiping, happy tourist camp, with every one making of it one big family.

These town tourist parks become meeting places for tourists from all parts of the country. Here they may camp in comfort while they renew old friendships of the road and continue discussions broken off by the roadside. Here they meet and open their tin cans at their ease and tell about the glories of the part of the country from which they come.

Here they may inspect each other's cooking and sleeping arrangements; wonder at the ingenuity of that inventor from New York who has combined a table and kitchenette and carries both on the running board of a light roadster; marvel at the completeness of the two room cottage with sleeping quarters for all members of the family, and an efficient kitchen in addition, with a gasoline stove for rainy weather when the usual campfire cannot be built; speculate on the construction of the new outdoor oven in which, so the owner proudly insists, a fire can be built in a combined hurricane and cloudburst.

But it is not only here that the "tin can tourists" congregate. Many turn north as the days grow hotter and seek the cooling breezes from the lake. And here the tourists have discovered a way to beat the high cost of exclusive summer resorts, where a day's hotel bills dent the family's bank account as much as a summer of "tin can" touring.

They carry their hotel with them. They park it within a mile or two of the most exclusive hotel. Then, when clean collars and whisk brooms have done their work, there is nothing to prevent the tourist and his family from walking across to the most expensive hotel at the resort and ensconsing themselves in the choice chairs on the piazza. Here they may enjoy as cool a breeze as those who are official hotel guests; they may, if they choose, have tea in the same tea room; certainly they may bathe in the same lake. Perhaps hotel attaches will stare at them with some displeasure, but what is the displeasure of a hotel attache? And then, when they choose, they may walk back to their hotel on wheels and cook their dinner on the running board, opening their cans undisturbed.

Here they may stay as long as they choose, with no thought of the bill which may confront them at the end of the week. Here, to the delight of the town grocers and the disgust of the hotel owners, they form colonies. At night they may transport the social life of these colonies to the ballroom of the nearest hotel and dance with the most aristocratic of the seekers after cool breezes.

It is, as they say themselves, "a great little game."

But it is not only the hotel owners in the Northern summer resorts who become involuntary hosts to the tourist who carries his home with him. As the fall comes on many turn toward the South and spend the winter where the sun is warm and a midwinter dip in the surf is not impossible. Many, especially those from the East, make the resorts of Florida their objective.

And in Florida is Palm Beach. There are, to be sure, many towns where the sun is as warm and the water as inviting, but there is only one Palm Beach, and it is the ambition of many of the tourists to spend at least a few days there. And by repeating the tactics employed in the Northern resorts many families who would not find it possible to pay the high hotel prices are enabled to enjoy most of the pleasures of the resort without paying the piper very highly.

Just across the bridge from Palm Beach is West Palm Beach, where food prices are low and there is plenty of room to park the car. Here the tourists park. From their parking place it is an easy road across the bridge to the famous resort itself; an easy road and one much traveled.

Across the bridge the tourists may ride in the wheel chairs as easily as any one; may rent bathing suits for a plunge in the ocean; may have tea in the famous Cocoanut Grove. They may dance on the dancing platform. Practically none of the advantages of the resort is denied them.

The "tincanners" are a heterogeneous group. Retired farmers, seeking relaxation; weary city dwellers, eager for a breath of fresh country air; young married couples giving love in a cottage on wheels a tryout. They are all very proud of the devices for comfort they have invented; all very sure that their indomitable car is equal to any emergency.

Why Premier Briand Was Afraid of the Fallen Rooster

THE day Briand left America to return to France he stopped his cab while being driven along New York's Fifth avenue and pointed to the tower of a new building rising high at Fifty-seventh street and the avenue.

"That would be considered by some a bad omen," he said to a companion. He was pointing to a huge stone rooster perched atop the tower, which in the stress of a storm had lost its proud poise and was awkwardly leaning with its bill pointing downward.

Briand's companion exclaimed, "Ah, le coq Gaulois!" which would be by way of saying in English, "The rooster of France!"

"But," the companion continued, "its temporary downfall can hardly be an ill omen for you, Monsieur Briand."

It seems that it was, however. For soon after Briand reached France he met his own downfall and resigned.

The former Premier told the story of the fallen rooster during a speech in Paris, emphasizing the almost general belief of the French that it only is while their coq Gaulois is crowing that all is well with them.

Le coq Gaulois is a national emblem of France.

To the ancients the rooster emphasized the idea of victory. In heraldry it represents vigilance, hardiness and pride, and sometimes a religious significance because of its association with the humiliation of St. Peter. The last is largely the reason to-day that a cock is placed on many church steeples—to remind mankind of its religious shortcomings and obligations. But it is interesting to recall that it was not the original reason, which was that the cock was supposed to be the only creature that created fear in the lion.

So our forefathers with their acknowledged skill at capitalizing metaphor accepted the Biblical passage that Satan roams the world like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and after having established stone goblins in the angles of their religious edifices to scare off the lesser evil spirits placed the cock atop the steeples or towers to safeguard them against Satan himself.

That the cock might be more conspicuous and create greater discomfiture to the lion he subsequently was mounted to turn with the wind, and later gilded to shine defiance. It became the inspiration of mounting weather vanes on higher places, and because, later, of the preponderance of a type adopted weather vanes became known technically as weather cocks. The placing of cocks on stables and other buildings was, because of their symbolism of watchfulness and their matutinal habit of welcoming the sun—at times a little previous—with their "clarion" calls.

The game cock stepped to the front with the ancients as symbolic of martial spirit and of war because of its pugnacity, its readiness to give battle; its comb a helmet, its bill to wound and slay, its spurs to fight and rout the enemy. When it is victorious it crows, and when vanquished it avoids light and society. A white game cock with a red comb was sacrificed to Mars on the eve of battle.

Small boys who stage clandestinely cock fights behind the stable or barn between game bantams or common barnyard roosters as well as an element of the sporting fraternity are antedated by the Greeks at Athens during the Persian wars.

The cock's comb, or cresti galli, conventional and developed, topped the helmets of the Greek heroes prior to the existence of the Latin language. The cock's comb is the warrior ornament on the helmet of the modern dragoon. Crests in the Middle Ages were worn as signs of distinction, honor and personal prowess. With wide latitude, figures and designs on the helmets of knights were designated as "crests." To this with greater license we are indebted for the term "crest" in heraldry.

The cock was not only sacred to Mars, but notably to Minerva, Apollo, Mercury, Hercules and to the sun. Hercules was supposed to have discovered the hot, medicinal springs at Imera, Sicily, which gave the Greeks the opportunity, always desired, of creating a new cult. The appellation of an appropriate new deity to preside over the springs became Æsculapius; and he, lacking originality, selected the cock as his symbol.

It is interesting to know that, in the language of Circassia, Circassia meant cock, and that bird was the nation's emblem. Also it is the badge of Wales. (Obviously, the inference is Lloyd George.) Henry the Eighth of England bore the badge of Wales, "argent combed and wattled, gules," along with the Saxon red dragon.

A cock was sacrificed to Attis, the god of spring and fertility of the Eastern Mediterranean. In the Lateran Museum in Rome is preserved the cinerary urn of a high priest (an archigallus) of Attis. Its top is covered in relief with sprays of wheat and surmounted by a cock trailing a tail of wheat. Also the cock and hen were symbolic, with the ancients, of the great egg from which the world was hatched at its beginning.

In the museum at St. Germain-on-Laye is a frontal of an altar found in Paris, of the period of the Roman occupation. It has a sculptured figure of Mercury, of barbaric type, thick set and bearded. His caduceus is surmounted by a cock.

The cock appeared frequently in heraldry during the early history of France. In 1214, after the Dauphin du Viennois had distinguished himself in combat with the English, an order of knights was formed called the Ordre du Coq. Thus a white cock became an emblem of the Dauphins of Viennois.

The cock decorated the flags of the First Republic. The emblems under Napoleon the First, as Emperor, as we all know, were the eagle, bee and violet. But following the election of Louis Philippe as King of France, in 1930, the cock was definitely adopted as the avian emblem. It was worn as a badge on the shakos of the officers of the civic guards of Louis Philippe. The fleur de lis and the cock were acknowledged emblems of Louis Philippe. During Louis Naporeon's Presidency of the Second Republic the cock was in evidence, but on his election as Emperor—Napoleon Third, in 1852—it was suppressed by his order.

Mexico's Curious "Tree With Hands"

NATURE in the hot climates sometimes does extraordinary things. Few instances of the singular fact that nature, possibly for protection, repeats in flowers and plants the shape or appearance of other objects, are more astonishing than the tree with hands. The Aztecs in Mexico were so much impressed by it that they offered it most devout worship. To them the Macpalxochiquakiti, as they called it—"the Hand Flower Tree"—with its blood red hands, was the earthly expression of a deity, dreadful and almighty. Its botanical title, it almost as long, is rather better sounding—the Cheirostemon platanoides.

The appearance of the flowers of this high and splendid tree is certainly like no other. From the center of each bloom there springs a columnar stem which accurately represents a human arm and wrist, and this breaks into five stamens, which are of a gory hue and arranged after the manner of the human hand, with its finger and thumb. The very points of these vegetable fingers are curved like finger tips with overgrown nails. These parts of the Macpalxochiquakiti's flowers are of a fairly large size and stand out in a menacing manner at some distance above the petals.

It is easy to understand, then, that this lofty and noble looking tree, of which there are but very few throughout Mexico and northern Central America, laden with flowers, waving aloft like a thousand blood red hands, was an object of worship among the superstitious and ignorant natives.

The Cheirostemon platanoides has its parallel, though, in one of the rarest of plants in Japan—the Five-Fingered Orange.

This dwarf tree, that is seldom more than five feet high and one of the most crooked, grows its fruit in the exact shape of the human hand, fingers, thumb and all. It is a partly opened hand and the hard pointed nails of the lean, yellow fruit-hand are the closest imitation to the nails of an aristocratic Chinaman.